



Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA) Home and Community Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) Regional Reporting Numbers

Region 1

Spokane, Grant, Okanogan, Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Lincoln, Ferry, Stevens, Whitman, and Pend Oreille Counties

1-800-459-0421

Region 2

Yakima, Kittitas, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties

1-877-389-3013

Region 3

Snohomish, Skagit, Island, San Juan, and Whatcom Counties

1-800-487-0416

Region 4

King County

1-866-221-4909

Region 5

Pierce County

1-800-442-5129

Kitsap County

1-888-833-4925

Region 6

Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Skamania, Klickitat, and Clark Counties

1-877-734-6277

Aging & Disability *Services*

PARTNERS AGAINST ADULT ABUSE



A Reporting Guide For Mandatory Reporters



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA)

Abuse of vulnerable adults happens more often than any of us would like to admit. It is serious, and it can happen in any setting.

All of us, as responsible citizens, must help to prevent and stop abuse, neglect, abandonment, and exploitation of vulnerable adults. Report suspected abuse to the appropriate authorities.

It is mandatory by law for some professionals to report suspected abuse. **You MUST report suspected abuse, if you are a(n).** . .

- DSHS employee;
- Law enforcement officer;
- Social worker;
- Professional school personnel;
- Individual provider contracted to provide services for a DSHS client;
- Employee of any facility licensed by DSHS, such as employee and operators of boarding homes, adult family home, nursing homes, residential habilitation centers and soldiers' homes;
- Health care provider subject to Title 18 RCW (such as a nurse or doctor);
- Contracted Individual Provider caring for a DSHS client;
- Employee of a social service, welfare, mental health, adult day health, adult day care, home health, home care, or hospice agency;
- County coroner or medical examiner;
- Christian Science practitioner;
- Health care provider under RCW 18.130, such as physicians and nurses.

Vulnerable Adult

- Adults 60 years of age or older who cannot take care of themselves;
- Adults 18 years of age or older who:
 - Have a legal guardian;
 - Have a developmental disability;
 - Live in a facility licensed by DSHS/ADSA
 - Receive services from an individual provider contracted by DSHS;
 - Receive in-home services through a licensed health, hospice, or home care agency;
 - Self-directs their own care to a personal care aide who performs that care for compensation (RCW 74.34.021)

The legal reference mandating reporting of suspected abuse, neglect and financial exploitation is in Chapter 74.34 RCW.

Ordering Publications

You may order this booklet and other DSHS publications through the Department of Printing's (DOP) General Store. Go to the DOP's website at:

www.prt.wa.gov

You can find this brochure and other publications on the ADSA website. Visit the site at:

www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov

Abuse is a willful action or inaction that causes harm. It includes physical, mental, and sexual abuse (including non-consensual contact or consensual contact with a caregiver).

Signs of physical abuse:

- unexplained bruises, welts, black eyes, wounds, or fractures;
- multiple injuries in various stages of healing;
- sudden changes in behavior (adult is fearful or depressed or engages in self-destructive behavior);
- the caregiver refuses to allow visitors;
- person is in restraints or locked in a room;
- missing patches of hair or hemorrhaging below the scalp;
- the person reports abuse.

Signs of mental abuse:

- person is emotionally upset, agitated, withdrawn, non-communicative, depressed, or nonresponsive;
- caregiver refuses to allow visitors or does not let the person participate in family or community events;
- the person reports abuse.

Signs of sexual abuse:

- bruising around breasts and/or genital area;
- an unexplained venereal disease;
- soiled underclothes or bedding;
- the person reports being sexually abused;
- sudden change in behavior.

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES THAT NO PERSON, BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, AGE, RELIGION, CREED, OR DISABILITY, SHALL BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN ANY ASPECT OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

Abandonment is leaving the vulnerable adult without means of caring for self.

Signs of abandonment:

- adult is deserted in a public place or in his or her own home;
- the adult reports being abandoned.

Neglect is the failure to maintain the health and safety of a vulnerable adult.

Signs of neglect and self-neglect:

- dehydration;
- malnutrition;
- untreated injuries, or unattended health problems, including poor dental health;
- person appears unclean and/or poorly groomed;
- person lying in feces or urine, or a strong odor of feces or urine;
- unsafe living conditions.

Exploitation is pressuring or manipulating a vulnerable adult to act differently than they have in the past or to perform services benefiting others. Exploitation of a vulnerable adult may be financial or personal.

Signs of exploitation:

- unexplained or unusual use of bank cards or sudden transfer of money;
- forged signature on checks;
- disappearance of possessions;
- overcharge for home repairs or other work;
- signs of telephone or mail soliciting (magazines, prize items);
- use of home or possessions for illegal activities.

Reporting

If you think someone may be in danger or needs urgent help, call 911 or your local law enforcement immediately.

Where do you report?

If the person you suspect is being abused lives in a

- Nursing home
- Boarding home (including assisted living)
- Adult family home

Call the DSHS Complaint Resolution Unit at: **1-800-562-6078.**

If the person you think is being abused lives in:

- Their own or family’s home or apartment

Call the DSHS APS Regional Reporting number in the area where he/she lives in Washington State. The APS numbers can be found on the back of this brochure.

When you report, you will be asked:

- The name, address, apartment number, age, and telephone number of the adult you think is being harmed.
- Any information about the circumstances.
- The name, address, relationship and telephone number of the person you think is **causing** the harm.
- Names of other people who can provide information about the situation.
- Any safety concerns you may have.
- Your name and address.



Important to know

- People who report in good faith have immunity from liability.
- The reporter’s name remains confidential (unless the reporter gives permission to release it, there is a judicial proceeding or DSHS forwards a potential crime report to law enforcement).
- The vulnerable adult will be interviewed in private.
- If living in their own home or family’s home, the vulnerable adult must consent to services and be informed of the right to refuse or withdraw from services. DSHS cannot remove an adult from their residence or place an adult in a different residence against their wishes.
- DSHS will report a suspected crime to law enforcement.
- Any protective services will be provided in the least restrictive environment available and appropriate to the vulnerable adult.

You must report immediately if you have reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult is being harmed. You do not need proof of that harm.

You must report suspected physical and sexual assault to both law enforcement and DSHS.

For further information about reporting actions between two vulnerable adults, see RCW 74.34.035